

AN EVALUATION OF READING COMPREHENSION TEXTBOOKS TAUGHT AT THE ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN WEST SUMETERA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of present study is to critically assess the reading comprehension textbooks which have been prescribed for use at the English Education Department of Public Islamic Higher Education in West Sumatera. The writer used a criteria taken from Cunningsworth' s (1995) and Miekley's (2005). These include (1) Aims and Approaches; (2) Design and Organization; (3) Content; (4) Skills; (5) Vocabulary and Grammar; (6) Exercises and Activities; (7) Methodology; (8) Attractiveness of the Text and Physical Make-Up; (9) Teacher's Manual; and (10) Practical Consideration. To interpret the checklist, the four rating scale was used, namely excellent, good, fair, and poor. The research showed that every textbook has strong and weak points. The result of this analysis could be used as the basis to gain more effective reading textbooks for the lecturer of reading comprehension.

Key words: evaluation; textbook; Islamic Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that textbook plays a pivotal role in teaching reading comprehension. Richard (2001: 251) points out that textbooks area key component of language teaching serving as the basis for much of the language input learners receive when learning a language. Parallel with this, Karamouzian (2010: 25) also states that textbooks are seen as central to teaching and learning, as their quality is a determining factor in enhancing or diminishing the quality of a language program.

This present study tried to evaluate five reading comprehension textbooks used at the English Education Department (EED) of Islamic Higher Education (IHE) in West Sumatera. The IHE was chosen for several reasons. First, the institution has 'double core curriculum'. Students are not only prepared to achieve academic excellence, but also to build Islamic values. Second, the writer is one of the lecturers of reading comprehension who has taught for more than one decade. Considering the fact, the textbook should ideally be designed to achieve the expected goal.

In evaluating textbooks, several researchers, educators, and reading specialists provide checklists as a tool to judge (Cunningsworth, 1995; Griffiths, 1995; Peacock, 1997; Harmer, 1998; 1997; Sheldon, 1998; Garinger, 2001; Litz, 2005; Miekley, 2005; and Jaganhard, 2007). Cunningsworth (1995; 2-4) suggests a checklist as follows: (1) aims and approach, (2) design and organization, (3) language content, (4) skills, (5) topic, (6) methodology, (7) teacher's books, and (8) practical consideration. Harmer (1998) proposes nine main areas to evaluate the textbooks; (1) price, (2) availability, (3) layout and design, (4) methodology, (5) skills, (6) syllabus, (7) topic, (8) stereotyping, and (9) teacher's guide. Litz provides seven areas: (1) practical consideration, (2) layout and design, (3) activities, (4) skills, (5) language type, (6) subject and content, and (7) conclusion and overall concencuss. Finally, Miekley (2005:4-5) presents a set of criteria for reading comprehension textbooks. He divides the checklist into three major areas: textbook, teacher's manual, and context. Cunningsworth's (1995) and Miekley's (2005) checklist seems to be organized, more specifically in the field of reading comprehension, easy to follow and more objective evaluation.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach to present the data. To evaluate the quality of the reading comprehension textbooks, the

researcher used a checklist as developed by Cunningsworth's (1995) and Miekley's (2005). The checklist contains 10 criteria as follows: (1) Aims and Approaches; (2) Design and Organization; (3) Content; (4) Skills; (5) Vocabulary and Grammar; (6) Exercises and Activities; (7) Methodology; (8) Attractiveness of the Text and Physical Make-Up; (9) Teacher's Manual; and (10) Practical Consideration. To interpret the checklist, the four rating scale was used, namely excellent, good, fair, and poor.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are five textbooks used in teaching reading comprehension in IHE, especially at IAIN Padang, STAIN Batusangkar, and STAIN Bukittingi in West Sumatera. More detail description of textbooks used are shown below.

The five textbooks were then evaluated using a criterion developed from Cunningsworth's (1995) and Miekley's (2005). The results of the analysis are presented as follows:

Aims and Approaches

Almost all of the textbooks – *More Reading Power#1*, *Interaction #2*, *Guide to College Reading#3*, and *Reading Theories#4* did not meet specific criteria in terms of the aims and approach. For example, the textbooks did not present the Islamic issues in the reading selection as mandated in the vision and mission of the IHE. In addition, the textbooks did not explicitly integrate Islamic content and

reading selections. However, the textbooks can accommodate teaching and learning

styles. Considering the fact these textbooks were deemed *fair*.

Table 1
The Present Textbooks Used in Teaching Reading Comprehension

No	Title of the Textbook	Author(s)	Publisher, Year
1	More Reading Power	Beatrice S. Mikulecky and Linda Jeffries	Longman, New York, 1996
2	Interaction	Elaine Kim and Pamela Hatmann	Random House, New York, 1985
3	Guide to College Reading	Kathleen T. McWhorter	Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1986
4	Reading Theories	Zainil	Universitas Negeri Padang, 2000
5	Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students	Team of Five (Murni Djamal et al.)	Kencana, Jakarta. 2006

The only textbook corresponded closely with the aim of the teaching program and with the need of the learner of IHE was *Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students#5*. This textbook clearly specified Islamic reading in every part. Moreover, it explicitly integrated reading comprehension and Islamic content. However, this textbook fails to accommodate teaching and learning style. Therefore, this textbook was considered *fair*.

Design and Organization

The design and organization of a textbook refer to its organization, design, and layout. *More Reading Power#1* was supplemented by a teacher's guide and student's book. This textbook was

organized as follows: *Part One: Reading for Pleasure*. In this part, students are assigned to read more books on an individual basis. In addition to this, they will choose books to read and learn how to keep a record. *Part Two: Reading Comprehension Skill*. This part enables learners to use some essential reading skills. *Part Three: Thinking in English*. In this part, students are led to understand that reading is not translating, reading is thinking. *Part Four: Reading Faster*. This part deals with the skill development of reading faster with good comprehension. The particular emphasis of this textbook was placed on reading skills with the goal of establishing learners' awareness of the reading process so that they will be able to read in ways that are expected in college.

This textbook contained plenty of opportunities for practicing reading skills. Therefore, the content was sequenced according to the reading skills, starting from simple to more difficult in order to build up the students' mastery of the skill. For example, this textbook starts from scanning, skimming, inference, and author's pattern. Then, it moves to the more complex ones, thinking in English and reading faster. The grading and progression of the materials was suitable for the learners. In terms of layout, this textbook was designed more sophisticated. Considering the fact, it could be categorized *excellent*.

Likewise, *Interaction#2* was also equipped with students' book, teacher's book, and workbook. The organization of the textbook was outlined as follows: (1) Getting started: a pre-reading exercise consisting of a picture and question about it; sets the tone for the chapter, (2) preparing to read: pre-reading questions for the students to keep in mind as they read the selection, (3) reading selection: a controlled reading on the theme of the chapter, usually nonfiction, giving practical information, (4) getting the main ideas: a post-reading exercise to help students check their general understanding of the reading selection, (5) guessing meaning from context: specific suggestions followed by exercises on words from the reading selection, (6) understanding reading structure: exercises focusing on organization of ideas or relationships

between ideas, (7) understanding details: exercises focusing specific details of the reading selection, and (8) discussing the reading: questions that relate the reading selection to the students' lives and allow for conversation. This textbook was clearly organized on the basis of complexity—from the very simple one to demanding one. Furthermore, the grading and progression of the materials was fully controlled to be at the students' level of comprehension. With regard to layout, this textbook presented very clear layout. Therefore, this textbook was deemed *excellent*.

Guide to College Reading#3 was also supplemented by student's book, teacher's book, and workbook. This textbook was organized into five major sections as follows: *Part One* presented basic approaches to vocabulary development including contextual aids, analysis of word parts, pronunciation, and the use of dictionary and other reference sources. *Part Two* concerned with the development of literal comprehension skills. The topic includes such reading efficiency techniques as pre-reading and questioning, as well as extensive instruction and practice with sentence and paragraph comprehension. *Part Three* deals with skills for reading lengthy units of material such as article, essays, and chapters. *Part Four* concerned with the interpretative and analytical skills students need in order to interact with and evaluate written material. *Part Five*: Reading Selections contain

twenty articles, essays, and textbook excerpts chosen on the basis of interest and applicability to the skills taught in the texts. Furthermore, the grading and progression is designed well. With respect to layout, this textbook is considered good lay out. In conclusion, this textbook was considered *excellent*.

Reading Theories#4 was not supplemented with teacher's guide, and a student's guide. This textbook basically adapted materials from various references such as *Interaction, Guide to College Reading, Efficient and Flexible Reading, Scanning and Skimming, and Academic Writing*. Therefore, the design and organization vary from one unit to others. Reading skills were a central focus of this textbook. There are many opportunities for the learners to practice reading skills. For example, the skills of context clues, scanning, skimming, reference, and author's thought pattern. The textbook was organized as follows: *Unit 1*, for instance, discussed punctuation. *Unit 2* deals with context clues. *Unit 3* concerned reference. *Unit 4* presented core parts. *Unit 5* discussed Understanding Paragraph, *Unit 6* deals with Understanding Essay. *Unit 7* presented author's pattern, *Unit 8* was skimming and scanning. Furthermore, the content was organized based on reading skill. In addition, the sequence of content needs to improve as it was not sequenced based on the complexity. For example, the reading skill of skimming and scanning put as the last chapter of this textbook. Finally,

since this textbook was compiled from various books, the clarity of layout was one of the book's major weak points. Perhaps, this is caused by having copying several times. Considering the fact, this textbook was categorized *fair*.

Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students#5 was clearly equipped with a student's book, teacher's book, and workbook. It was organized into three books. *Book 1* starts with reading which is mostly based on the grammar learned, so that grammar in practice will be encountered more frequently. *Book II* will complete the study of the basic structure needed and will be followed by the increase of vocabulary study in a gradual process so that knowledge of the basic language material is sufficient to enable the students to understand almost automatically. *Book III* will help students to further master the reading skill through intellectual guessing, scanning, skimming, and finding the main idea of short or long essays that at the end becomes skill, which is acquired in reading. The organization of the textbook reflects a topic based structural functional syllabus that was designed with the goal of facilitating communicative competence. Although the ultimate goal of this book is establishing reading skills, a big issue of the lesson is devoted to grammar drills and various grammatical exercises. Furthermore, this textbook covers a wide range of materials from simple text like a simple story to more complex reading materials, such as

newspaper, magazine and novel. In addition to this, the grading and progression was designed to meet the learners' level of comprehension. Finally, the layout of this textbook needs some improvement. In conclusion, this textbook was considered *good*.

Content

With regard to content, *More Reading Power#1* meets specific criteria. Reading selections here not only offer authentic pieces of language, but also use representative of real-life language use. The lexical and syntactical contents of the materials have been kept to a minimum level. Furthermore, the reading selections contain the variety of literary genres as well as multiple sentence structures. Moreover, it enables learners to expand their awareness and enrich their experience. There were several topics discussed such as fiction, non-fiction, and popular culture. Finally, this textbook was able to promote learners to relate the social and cultural contexts. Therefore, this textbook was categorized *excellent*.

Likewise, *Interaction#2* presented authentic materials for all reading selections. As a result, it possibly can increase learner motivation. In general, the textbook contains the variety of literary genres and multiple sentence structures. Furthermore, this textbook presented a variety of topics such as instance, education, culture, food, social relationship, and health. However, since this

textbook was published in 1986, the content and topic selection is not updated anymore. It would be better if the topics are in line with the taste of the new generation which might be different from that of the authors who designed the book at least 26 years ago. The topic can expand students' awareness and enrich their experience. Finally, it encompasses a social and cultural understanding of things such as society's values and norms, discourse manner, and life style. Considering the fact, this textbook was considered *fair*.

Guide to College Reading#3 also presented authentic materials as well as variety of literary genres. However, as the case of *Interaction #2*, this textbook also seems need to be updated. It was published in 1986. As a result topics presented are not suitable for the new generations anymore. It can be suggested to include reading texts about internet, satellite program, and other burning issues on young generations. Furthermore, reading topics and materials were chosen carefully to relate to students' interests and background, while exhibiting potential for broadening their range of experience. In sum, this textbook was deemed *fair*.

Reading Theories#4 presented authentic materials. The reading selection remains representative of the variety of literary genres. In terms of the appropriateness of content, this textbook needs to provide updated content in accordance to the newest issues. Besides,

the topics are various and help students expand their awareness and enrich their experience. Finally, students are able to relate to the social and cultural contexts. As a result, this textbook was categorized *fair*.

Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students#5 presented both authentic and semi-authentic materials. Semi-authentic material refers to originally authentic but simplified and or modified. This textbook contains various topics such as story, politics, environment, and religion. It is interesting to note that religious issue seems to be the central topic of this textbook. However, it seems to fail to enrich students' experience as well as relate to social and cultural context. Many of reading selections were built based on local culture. Therefore, this textbook was deemed *good*.

Skills

The aspect of skills in this context means (1) to what extent the reading book reflect the development and reading skills and strategy, (2) the reading material linked to other skills, (3) there is an emphasis on reading for pleasure and for intellectual satisfaction, (4) to what extent the textbook encourage intensive and extensive reading.

More Reading Power#1 was considered *good*. The reading selection consistently enables learners to apply reading skill and reading strategy. For example, in order to improve students'

ability to apply scanning, the authors provided various ways such as providing a detailed understanding and giving lots of exercises dealing with scanning. As a result, students can achieve the expected goal. Furthermore, the textbook encouraged learners to work in pair or small group. In addition, students need to formulate and articulate their ideas more precise and so they also acquire new ways of talking and thinking about a text. Students are also asked to write and then read each other's work so they can experience the connection between reading and writing. Therefore, the integrated skills were presented in this textbook. Likewise, this textbook offered reading for pleasure as well as for intellectual satisfaction. Moreover, in terms of the text lengths, it is appropriately presented. However, the textbook did not explicitly promote extensive reading activities. The authors seem to believe that improvement in general reading comes with reading a lot.

Interaction#2 could be classified *excellent*. The reading text used for introducing new language items. Likewise, the reading selection enables learners to promote reading skills and reading strategies. For example, students can apply skimming for main ideas, scanning for the specific information, guessing the meaning from context, and inferring the writer's idea in the texts. Furthermore, this textbook managed to integrate the four language skills. Students possibly to

carefully listen and orally share their ideas, and appropriately write reading summary as well as reading exercises. Besides, this textbook also puts emphasize on both reading for pleasure and reading intellectual satisfaction. In addition, the author seems designed reading selection on the basis of students' level of comprehension. As a result, the text length was appropriate for the learner. Finally, it is interesting to note that this textbook encouraged extensive reading.

Guide to College Reading#3 could be classified as *good*. The reading selection and a variety of extensive exercises were provided to encourage students to apply reading skills and strategies presented. Similarly, the integration of reading and writing skill is one major emphasis of this textbook. For instance, answers to most questions for each reading selection require composition. On whether or not there was emphasize of reading for pleasure and for intellectual satisfaction, the reading selection clearly presented them. However, the text length does not correspond to students' level of comprehension. Fact shows that some of reading selection was difficult for the learners to comprehend. Finally, extensive reading activity was not explicitly showed in this textbook.

Reading Theories#4 was deemed good. It specified focus on the development of reading skill and strategy. Some selected reading selection was enable learner to apply the skill of scanning,

skimming, predicting, guessing meaning from context, and determining author's patterns. Likewise, the reading materials integrated to listening, speaking, and writing. Several materials force students discuss with others and to write individually. In addition to this, both reading for pleasure and reading for intellectual satisfaction were presented in this textbook. With regard to text length, it was suitable to the learners. However, this textbook did not encourage learners to apply extensive reading activities.

Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students#5 was categorized *fair*. It failed to put the focus on the development of reading skills. Even though there were several specific topics discussed such as scanning and skimming, it was far from expecting that learners were able to apply the reading skill and strategy. The researcher has noticed that about 70 percent of the content of each unit was occupied with grammar drills. This textbook also puts emphasize on reading both for pleasure and for intellectual satisfaction, it was presented. However, it needs some improvement. The text designed too simple and easy for students to comprehend it. As a result, students possibly de-motivated to read. One more thing, extensive reading activities could not be found here.

Vocabulary and Grammar

More Reading Power#1 seems to ignore the grammar rules in a logical manner. However, in terms of vocabulary, the textbook presented it in various ways. For instance, the use of synonym, antonym, definition, words in context and so on. On whether or not the new vocabulary words presented at an appropriate rate so that the text is understandable, the result showed that they are not appropriately presented. Similarly, regarding to the issue of the new vocabulary words repeated in a subsequent lesson to reinforce their meaning and use, they are not apparent. Moreover, this book presented top-down and bottom-up techniques for learning new vocabulary. Therefore, this textbook was categorized *fair*.

Interaction#2 meets specific criterion in terms of vocabulary and grammar. The grammar points have been carefully sequenced and controlled to be at the students' level of comprehension. Furthermore, the new vocabulary words are presented in a variety of ways. For example, the use of definition, contrast, words in context, punctuation, and part of speech. Similarly, vocabulary items presented in one chapter are recycled in subsequent chapters to prevent students from forgetting them. As mentioned by the author, the constant recycling enables learners to make rapid progress; their vocabulary will increase dramatically as they use the book, and yet this process won't be perceived as difficult. Finally, top-

down and bottom-up techniques for learning new vocabulary were presented. Considering the fact, this textbook was deemed *excellent*.

Guide to College Reading#3 presented the grammar rules, but not in a gradual manner. It also follows the logical progression of skill development from words to sentences and then to paragraphs, articles, essays, and chapters. It also proceeds logically from literal comprehension to critical interpretation and reaction. In addition, new vocabulary was presented in a variety of ways. Finally, top down techniques were discussed several times here. Therefore, this textbook was considered *good*.

Reading Theory#4 presented grammar rules in order. Besides, this textbook also discussed new vocabulary variously. For example, it used using synonym, and antonym, context clues. In addition, students were easy to retain new vocabulary since it was presented at an appropriate rate. On whether new vocabulary word repeated in subsequent lessons, it clearly could not be found here. However, although top down techniques were presented, it was not sufficient enough. In sum, this textbook was deemed *fair*.

Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students#5 meets the specific criterion. Since this textbook puts emphasis on grammatical accuracy, grammar rules were presented in a logical manner. The authors seem to believe that

a correct knowledge of grammar and functions are the basic foundation of good reading comprehension. As a result, almost all of the textbook sections presented grammatical use. In terms of presenting new vocabulary, this textbook used a variety of ways such as glosses and multi-glosses, and appositives. In addition to this, new vocabulary words were presented at an appropriate rate so that the text is understandable. Unfortunately, the authors did not put top-down strategy for learning new vocabulary words. Considering the fact, this textbook was deemed *good*.

Exercises and Activities

With respect to exercises and activities, *More Reading Power#1* can be categorized *good*. This textbook was designed task-based activities. Every part of this textbook contains various and challenging exercises and activities. In addition, top-down and bottom-up strategies are presented and practiced in this book. For example, using pictures, illustration, and tables could be found very often. Moreover, the exercises here enable learners to apply critical thinking. Nevertheless, activities facilitate students' use of grammar as well as extensive reading activities are not presented.

Likewise *Interaction#2* was *good*. This textbook requires students to do a more challenging task. Furthermore, exercises and activities could guide students toward acquiring the skills of good readers. In the

case of applying grammar rules, this book presents more. For instance, the application of prefix, suffix, noun, verb, adjective, adverb is occurring very often. In addition, the exercises were designed to make reading both easy and fun. Similarly, exercises enable learners to apply critical thinking. Despite its strength, this textbook still had shortcomings. Many of activities and tasks, for example, were repetitive, failed to present various activities, nor lead to updated issue. The exercises in the textbook also enable learners to apply critical reading. Finally, and it is interesting to note, that this textbook promotes extensive reading activities at every unit.

Guide to College Reading#3 was *fair*. Although this textbook presents task-based activities, the author seems did not pay more attention to the level of text difficulties. As a result, students got some difficulties in doing it. There are many unknown words found in several reading selections. There might be several possible factors render a text difficult to understand: the background knowledge, the content of the passage, and the length and complexity of the sentence. In addition, this textbook requires students to undertake more difficult tasks such as inferring to context. It must be noted that the level of difficulty has not been fulfilled yet. As a result, some reading selections found difficult for the learners to comprehend. Finally, this textbook did not promote extensive reading activities.

Reading Theories#4 offers task-based activities to require students to use new vocabulary to communicate. This textbook encourages students to read for comprehension. In other words, literal and critical thinking was focused on every part. Furthermore, this textbook also gave sufficient examples of top-down techniques. However, this textbook seems lack of challenging and various exercises and tends to be simplistic. In regard with extensive reading activities, it was presented in very limited. Considering the fact this textbook could be categorized *fair*.

Then, *Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students#5* was considered *fair*. The authors of the textbook tend to focus the exercises according to the structural complexity, starting from less complex structures to more demanding ones. Almost all exercises contain grammar drills and reviews on basic patterns in English. Even the reading passages were manipulated according to particular grammar points. Furthermore, reading instruction in this textbook did not require students to read for comprehension. In terms of reading strategies used, this textbook just presented bottom up reading strategies. The exercises did not promote critical thinking of the text. In other words, students can easily answer the questions without seriously reading the text, nor using critical thinking. With respect to extensive reading activities, it is safe to say that no particular activity found.

Methodology

Methodology in this context refers to (1) approaches used in this book, (2) level of active learner involvement can be expected, (3) techniques used for presenting/practicing new language items, (4) how the different skills taught, (5) how communicative ability developed, and (6) how teachers activate students' background knowledge before reading.

More Reading Power#1 meets suggested specific criterion. This textbook offers a clear approach in presenting reading materials. Furthermore, this textbook provides learners to get involved in the teaching process. For example, this textbook encourages students to work in pairs or small groups. In discussion with others, students need to formulate and articulate their ideas more precisely, and so they also acquire new ways of talking and thinking about a text. Besides, communicative ability was developed in this book. Finally, the activation of students' knowledge before reading the text was carefully presented in this book. For instance, in every unit, the authors explain the definition of certain skill and followed by examples prior to practicing the skill. In sum, this textbook was deemed *excellent*.

Interaction#2 also meets specific criterion in terms of methodology. This textbook tends to focus on the communicative approach. It promotes integrated language skills practice, the inclusion of topical themes, grammatical

structures and functions, as well as lexical development. As a result, students possibly read actively, work with just in one partner, and do in small groups. In addition, this textbook also develops students' schemata in reading. For example, in pre-reading activities, the learners are encouraged to predict the content and the context of the text based on pictures and simple questions at every unit. Even new vocabulary items were presented before providing reading selection. In conclusion, this textbook was considered *excellent*.

Guide to College Reading#3 based its methodology on developing students' reading skill. However, this textbook did not clearly show active learner involvement. For example, it did not encourage learners to work in peer or small groups. Furthermore, this textbook used the technique for presenting new language items such as the use of drawings, diagrams, and visual aids throughout the text. With respect to teaching the different skills, it was presented here. Activation of students' knowledge in pre-reading activities was presented. For example, each reading selection was prefaced by an interest-catching introduction, a vocabulary review, and pre-reading questions. Therefore, this textbook was deemed *good*.

However, *Reading Theories*#4 did not fulfill the criteria. The author of this textbook did not clearly specify the ultimate goal of this reading textbook. As a result,

both teacher and students did not know what they are expected to have learned at the end of the program. It should be understood that this is a textbook compilation. So that it is difficult to find the blueprint of its teaching methodology. Finally, this textbook cannot activate students' background knowledge. Considering the fact, this textbook was deemed *poor*.

Improving Reading Skill in English for University Students#5 used grammatical approach in presenting the materials. Besides, this textbook did not offer an innovative approach in language teaching. In addition, this textbook cannot achieve active learner involvement. Fortunately, it presented various techniques for new language items. With respect to implementing reading strategies and skills, it seems that this textbook failed to lead students to practice several reading strategies and skills. Likewise, the communicative abilities cannot be achieved here. Finally, activating students' background knowledge could not be found in this textbook. In sum, this textbook was deemed *fair*.

Attractiveness of the Text and Physical Make-Up

In terms of attractiveness of the text and physical make-up, at first glance, it would seem that *More Reading Power*#1 meets many of these requirements. The cover of this textbook was not attractive enough. However, this textbook was supplemented

by visual imagery of high aesthetic quality. It contains pictures, authentic photographs, illustration, and table to contextualize so that reader possibly enjoys reading it. Even for the exercises, there were authentic tables, picture, and photographs available to help readers clarify the meaning. Therefore, this textbook was deemed *good*.

Likewise, *Interaction#2* could be categorized into *good*. As the case of the previous textbook, the cover of this textbook is not appealing. This textbook however, presents visual materials. It puts various diagrams, chart, table, hand-drawn pictures, and illustration. This can provide opportunities for the learners to clarify the meaning. Considering these aids, students could enjoy reading the text.

Guide to College Reading#3 did not fulfill the specific criteria. The textbook cover was not attractive enough. With regard to the visual imagery of the aesthetic quality, this textbook presented visual approach to learning, including drawings, diagrams, a visual aid to illustrate concepts, was used through the text. Considering the fact, it could be categorized *fair*.

Reading Theories#4 also did not fulfill the specific criteria as expected. For example, the cover of the textbook was not qualified yet. Since this textbook was compiled from many references, the original form has been distorted. In addition, many often, the textbook was of low quality in the case of visual materials.

Only very few visual could be found here. As a result, students might not be interested in reading the textbooks. Therefore, it was considered *poor*.

Reading Skill in English for University Students#5 had an attractive cover. However, it did not present materials accompanied by good visual ones. Even though a bit pictures and illustrations were provided, it cannot present more attractively. It should be noted that it is not interesting to enjoy the reading text. Considering the fact, it was deemed *fair*.

Teacher's Manual

It is interesting to note that almost all the textbooks, with the exception of *Reading Theories#4* are supplemented by teacher's manual including guidance for the teachers and correct suggested answers. One more positive note is all of the textbooks, except *Reading Theories#4* informed more detail to use the textbooks in teaching reading comprehension including teaching techniques.

More Reading Power#1, for example, provided a clear guidance for the teachers who will be using the textbook. Reading materials are also supported in this textbook. Furthermore, it provides the answer key for the whole exercises. It is interesting to note that specific suggestions for using more reading power in every unit were included. Therefore, this textbook was categorized *excellent*

Likewise, *Interaction#2* provided instructions and guidelines for use of the

textbook separately. A variety of reading materials and answer key were also included in this textbook. Furthermore, it also presented a separate section with teaching tips and other suggestions. This textbook even provided sample tests. Considering the fact, this textbook was considered *excellent*.

Guide to College Reading#3 also informed more detailed guidance for the teachers to use the textbook. A large variety of reading materials were also provided. With respect to an answer key, this textbook clearly presented it specifically. In addition to this, it describes in detail the basic features of the text and offers suggestions for structuring the course, for teaching developmental students, and for approaching each section of the text. In conclusion, this textbook was deemed *excellent*.

Reading Theories#4 did not describe guidance for the teachers who will be using the textbook. However, reading materials as well as supported materials were provided. With regard to answer key, this textbook did not present it. Finally, this textbook did not describe the teaching techniques. Therefore, this textbook was categorized *fair*.

Reading Skill in English for University Students#5 provided adequate guidance for the teachers to use the textbook. In addition to this, reading materials were also included. However, this textbook did not present answer key for the teachers. Finally, this textbook described the

teaching techniques. Therefore, this textbook was deemed *fair*.

Practical Consideration

The final criterion of reading book is a practical consideration. It deals with (1) the whole package cost; (2) whether or not the book is strong and long lasting; and (3) whether it is easy to obtain.

More Reading Power#1 could be purchased online. One could visit the website such as www.amazon.com or www.BukuKita.com. However, Indonesian students who have limited incomes could not purchase such high cost. For this reason, commonly students were given a copy of a book by the lecturer of reading comprehension and students were expected to purchase their own copy. This indicates the fact that the textbook was not readily available in Indonesian bookstores. In addition, the book was made of durable paper and the presentation of information appears to be clear and concise. Finally, the textbook was good in terms of attractiveness. Considering the fact, it was considered *good*.

Likewise, *Interaction#2* could not be easy to purchase as it was not available in bookstores. Therefore, students only could get the book from a copy of the original book by the lecturer. Since the numbers of pages were 269, the students could easily copy the original book. The textbook was strongly bound and can be used for a long time. In addition, it offers attractive

textbook. Therefore, this textbook was deemed *good*.

Guide to College Reading#3 has the same characteristics with the previous textbooks. Students could not easily obtain the book as it was not readily available in bookstores. For this reason, commonly students were given a copy of a book by the lecturer and students were expected to purchase their own copy. Since the volume of the textbook was much, including 372 pages, the students possibly to spend highly cost to copy the original textbook. The textbook was made of strong and long lasting paper. Considering the fact, this could be categorized *fair*.

Reading Theories#4 was not available in the bookstore and library. Commonly the lecturer asked students to make a copy of the book and the students were expected to purchase their own copy. Unfortunately, this textbook seems to not be designed in attractive as it was recopied several times. With regard to the numbers of pages, it offers 126 pages so that students could easily copy the original book. Therefore, this textbook was deemed *fair*.

It is interesting to note that *Reading Skill in English for University Students#5* offers affordable cost. Some Indonesian well-established bookstores such as *Gramedia* and *Gunung Agung* bookstores as well as local bookstores provide the series of books. Even all of public libraries collect these books. In addition to this, the publisher of this book, *Kencana*, was accessible for crucial information and order

request. Furthermore, the textbook was designed attractive appearance and long lasting. Considering the fact this textbook was considered *excellent*.

CONCLUSION

The results of this report conclude that every textbook has strong and weak points. Jahangard (2007: 148) states that one of the ways to improve curriculum is to improve the textbook and the materials employed in the program. Therefore, the results of this analysis can be used as the basis to gain more effective reading textbooks.

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